

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY El Salvador

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SUBJECT Recent Communist Gains in the UTF

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SOURCE

1. A division in the ranks of the Union de Trabajadores Ferrocarrileros (UTF) brought about by a split along political lines, is providing the Communist Party of El Salvador with an opportunity to increase its influence within this potent labor organization. Two factions, one allied with the Partido Accion Renovadora (PAR) and led by Communists Carlos Alex Gomez, Jose Francisco Sanchez, and Moises Lopez, and the other group tied to the Partido Revolucionario de Unificacion (PRUD) and led by moderates Benjamin Mejia Martinez, Juan Brigido Cardona, Vidal Tomasino, and Andres Sandoval, are contending for leadership and control of the railroad workers.
2. In order to capitalize on the fact that the UTF lacks united leadership the Communists have recently embarked on the following program:
 - (a) Capture the direction of the UTF periodical Trenes.
 - (b) Reorganize and dominate the "strike committee" that was disbanded following the November 1949 railroad strike.
 - (c) Formation of a "cultural committee" made up exclusively of members sympathetic to Communism.
3. The Communists have already met with considerable success in their efforts to take over Trenes. They have placed Vicente Urrutia Letona in the position of Director, Jose Oscar Rica as Editor, and Antonio Amaya Barillas as Administrator. With respect to the future editorial policy of this publication, the Communists will seek to have Trenes advocate the following:
 - (a) Unity of the Salvadoran working class.
 - (b) Establishment of a single workers union.
 - (c) Enactment of new labor laws based on extreme leftist standards.
 - (d) Guarantees by the government that labor will be respected and be given freedom to organize.
 - (e) Fight against imperialism.

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4. The Communist faction in the UTF remains inferior numerically to the moderate group, but under the existing circumstances they are wielding power far beyond their accustomed strength and are in an excellent position to gain control of the union. As in the past the Communists in the UTF are working under the guise of the CNO (Comite de Reorganizacion Obrera) and their immediate objective is to bring the UTF into that Communist-dominated organization.

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